

MAX AND IRIS STERN  
INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 13



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# INDIGENOUS WOMEN, EMBODIMENT AND SOVEREIGNTY

CINQUIÈME SALLE, PLACE DES ARTS  
FRIDAY 4 AND SATURDAY 5, OCTOBER 2019

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**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES**

Daughter of a Québécois father and an Innu mother, **Michèle Audette**, herself a mother of five, got involved early in her life in the fight to end discrimination against Indigenous women. Her contribution to the defense of Indigenous women's rights in Canada has been exceptional. As a political and social activist since the 1990s she has played a key role in the transformation of relations between Indigenous Peoples and Québec and Canadian society, primarily by drawing attention to the political and social issues that affect Indigenous women. Over time, Audette has successfully fought for changes in provincial and federal policies to address discrimination, violence against Indigenous women and social inequality. In 2016, she was appointed as one of the commissioners to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

An internationally recognized multidisciplinary artist currently residing in Toronto, **Rebecca Belmore** is a member of Lac Seul First Nation (Anishinaabe). She has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions over the course of her distinguished career, notably at the Venice Biennale (2005), the Vancouver Art Gallery (2008), Justina M. Barnicke Gallery in Toronto (2011), and the latest iteration of documenta (14) in Kassel and Athens (2017). The exhibition currently presented at the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, *Rebecca Belmore: Facing the Monumental*, was initially presented at the Art Gallery of Ontario before moving on to the Remai Modern, in Saskatoon, and will head to Colorado Springs after its stop in Montréal. Belmore is the recipient of three honorary doctorates, as well as numerous awards, including the Gershon Iskowitz Prize (2016), the Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts (2013) and the Hnatyshyn Foundation Visual Arts Award (2009).

For thirty years, **Édith Cloutier**, member of the Anishinaabe First Nation, has sought to improve relations among nations and the well-being of Indigenous Peoples in towns and cities, and defended the rights of First Peoples. She has headed the Val-d'Or Native Friendship Centre since 1989, and is known for her boundless energy and people-oriented approach that's focused on finding solutions. Under her leadership the Centre has become a hub for the delivery of innovative services to First Peoples. She has also made her mark as president of the Regroupement des centres d'amitié autochtones du Québec (RCAAQ), as co-director of the ODENA Research Alliance—Aboriginal People in Québec Cities and Towns, and as chair of the Board of Directors of the Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue. In 2015, she played a vital role in supporting a number of Native women who denounced the abuses they had experienced at the hands of the Sûreté du Québec. Her dedication and commitment have been recognized; she has been named Chevalière de l'Ordre national du Québec (2006), and was awarded the Order of Canada (2013) and the Prix de la justice du Québec (2016). In 2018, she received an honorary doctorate from Concordia University.

**Dayna Danger** is a visual artist, performer and activist raised in so-called Winnipeg, Manitoba. Utilizing photography, sculpture, performance and video, Danger's practice questions the line between empowerment and objectification by claiming space with their larger-than-life-scale work. Danger's current use of BDSM and beading leather fetish masks explores the complicated dynamics of sexuality, gender and power in a consensual and feminist manner. Danger is currently based in Tio'tia:ke, or so-called Montréal. Danger holds an MFA in Photography from Concordia University, currently serves as a board member for the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective (ACC-CCA), and is an artist-in-residence through the Initiative for Indigenous Futures (IIF) at Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC). Danger is Métis-Saulteaux-Polish from Treaty 1 territory.

**Sedalia Kawenno:ta's Fazio's** cultural roots are on the other side of the bridge, in Kahnawà:ke. After moving to Montréal eighteen years ago, she quickly realized that young Indigenous People lacked a physical connection with their history and culture. This led Sedalia to undertake what would become a ten-year project culminating in the construction of a sweat lodge on the Island of Montréal. Her passion and dedication resulted in the establishment of a permanent home for this community project in Montréal's Botanical Gardens. Sedalia is often invited to speak in a variety of contexts, from the opening of the Viens Commission, to demonstrations (Idle No More) and seminars (notably on the topic of degrowth).

**Marie-Andrée Gill** is Pekuakamiushkueu, mother, sister, godmother, lover and poet. She has just finished a master's thesis in creative writing that looks at poetry and transpersonal and decolonial writing. In her three collections of poetry published by Éditions La Peuplade: *Béante* (2012), *Framer* (2015) and *Chaufer le dehors* (2019), Gill draws on her Innu and Québécoise identities with the aim of decolonizing minds and reappropriating the language of nature as a response to capitalism. Her writing moves between kitsch and the existential, offering a sharp view of reality.

**Mishuana Goeman**, Tonawanda Band of Seneca, is an Associate Professor of Gender Studies, Chair of American Indian Studies Interdepartmental Program, Associate Director of American Indian Studies Research Center, and the Special Advisor to the Chancellor on Native American and Indigenous Affairs at UCLA. She is the author of *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013) and the forthcoming *Settler Aesthetics and the Spectacle of Originary Moments: Terrence Malick's The New World* (University of Nebraska Press). She is a Co-PI on two community-based digital projects, *Mapping Indigenous LA* (2015), which gathers alternative maps of resiliency from Indigenous Los Angeles communities, and *Carrying Our Ancestors Home* (2019), an online platform concentrating on better working tribal relationships and communications within the context of the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).

**Kahente Horn-Miller** (Kanien'keha:ka/Mohawk) is an Assistant Professor in the School of Indigenous and Canadian Studies at Carleton University. She currently coordinates the development of Collaborative Indigenous Learning Bundles (CILB) at Carleton in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) calls to action. The Bundles are proving an effective model for engaging faculty, students and staff in Indigenous/Canadian history, while undoing troubled relations and opening eyes to Haudenosaunee pedagogical practices. This work is about building relations for the Seven Generations to come, or The Coming Faces. Horn-Miller also is a co-chair on the Carleton University Strategic Initiatives Committee, which is working towards developing a long-term Indigenous strategy for the university. Her teaching practice, published writing and performance/storytelling centre on the Haudenosaunee philosophy of feminine Mother-Law, bringing forth a way of engaging with the world in a relationship of respect, reciprocity and balance through ethical research, consensus-based decision making and collaborative engagement.

**Mylène Jaccoud** is Full Professor in the École de criminologie, Université de Montréal. Since 1985, her research has centred on: the repercussions of the imposition of the penal system on Indigenous peoples; the policies and adaptive practices of official government institutions, notably in the police, judicial and correctional sector; and Indigenous community initiatives that focus on restructuring socio-penal regulation (the development of alternatives to the penal system through justice committees, healing circles and restorative justice initiatives). Jaccoud is currently assisting with implementation of Nunavik's alternative Saqjuq project to rebuild social regulation in Inuit communities. She is doing research on the steps that Indigenous adults in Québec have taken to deal with the violence they have experienced. She has also worked with the team of experts mandated by the Viens Commission to specifically analyze police services.

**Nakuset** is an activist and the Executive Director of the Native Women's Shelter of Montréal. She is Cree from Lac la Ronge, Saskatchewan, and has three beautiful boys: Kistin, Mahkisis and Mahihkan. Nakuset was adopted by a Jewish family in Montréal and draws on her adoptee experience in her advocacy work for Indigenous children in care. She is the creator, producer and host of the television series *Indigenous Power*, she was voted "Woman of the Year 2014" by the Montréal Council of Women, and she is the Indigenous columnist for MATV's *CityLife*. Nakuset was featured in *Real Talk on Race*, the award winning CBC series. In 2017, she was selected by the CKX City Series as a speaker/shift disturber due to the work she does to shift the status quo for urban Aboriginal women. In November 2017, she was a speaker for TEDxMontréalWomen. Nakuset is dedicated to improving the lives of urban Aboriginals.

**Wanda Nanibush** is an Anishinaabe-kwe curator, image and word warrior from Beausoleil First Nation. She is currently Curator, Indigenous Art and co-lead of the Department of Indigenous and Canadian Art at the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto, and curator of the exhibition *Rebecca Belmore: Facing the Monumental*. Important exhibitions presented in other institutions include *Sovereign Acts* (initially presented at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery in 2012), and *Nanabozho's Sisters* (Dalhousie Art Gallery, 2018). With Georgiana Uhlyarik, Nanibush also recently co-curated the J.S. McLean Centre for Indigenous & Canadian Art and *Rita Letendre: Fire & Light* (2017). Nanibush's writing has been published widely in various magazines, catalogues and monographs. She has also taught graduate courses at the University of Toronto and OCAD University.

**Caroline Nepton Hotte** is a doctoral student in the Religious Studies program at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM); in June 2020 she will become a full-time faculty member in the Art History Department at UQAM. A member of the Innu community of Mashteuiatsh, Québec, Nepton Hotte has been investigating Native issues for more than twenty years, particularly with respect to First Nations women. Drawing from third-wave feminist criticism, postcolonial and Indigenous studies, she documents and analyzes the continuities and transformations in the expressions of identities and Indigenous cosmologies through the works of Indigenous women, with particular attention to art practices that integrate digital technologies. Nepton Hotte worked for more than ten years in public relations in institutions managed by and for First Nations. After completing her master's degree in Public Communications at Université Laval, she worked as a journalist in radio, television and online for Radio-Canada and the CBC.

**Niioie:ren** (Eileen Sawyer-Patton), Wakathahion:ni (Wolf Clan), Kanien'kehá:ka natia'to:ton (Mohawk Nation), Kahnawà:ke. Wife/mother/grandmother. I am involved in community, while assisting at the Patton's Glen Par 3 Golf Club and active in Kanien'kehá:ka Kanonhsesne (traditional longhouse) as Kaié:ri Niiorí:wake Konterihon:ton (Faithkeeper) responsible for making sure Kanien'kehá:ka spiritual ceremonial ways continue. I have given cultural workshops at: Stanford University (California), Dawson College, McGill University, Marianopolis College, Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project (KSDPP) and Kahnawà:ke Kateri School. I have helped develop community initiative programs that make it possible for traditional knowledge keepers to offer presentations in a variety of topics. With my ten-year-old granddaughter and my son, I sang "Opening Song" in a Westmount Park 2017 musical. Following the Oka Crisis in 1990, I worked with a council of religious leaders seeking understanding in the aftermath of a very confused and unresolved violent confrontation. I retired from a career in education, worked in Kahnawà:ke public schools as an administrator, school counsellor, resource teacher, and a Grade 2 immersion and kindergarten teacher.

**Alanis Obomsawin**, a member of the Abenaki Nation, is an activist and one of Canada's most distinguished filmmakers. As a prolific director with the National Film Board, she has created an extensive body of work focusing on the lives and concerns of Canada's First Nations, including such landmark films as *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance* (1993), documenting the 1990 Mohawk uprising in Kanehsatake and Oka, as well as her groundbreaking *Incident at Restigouche* (1984), a behind-the-scenes look at Québec Police raids on a Mi'gmaq reserve. Obomsawin has received honorary doctorates from many universities, including Dalhousie University (2016) and McGill University (2017), as well as the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television Humanitarian Award (2014), the Prix Albert-Tessier (2016) and the Directors Guild of Canada Honorary Life Member Award (2018). She was also named a Grande Officière of the Ordre national du Québec (2016) and a Companion of the Order of Canada (2019).

**Odaya** is a political Indigenous women's music collective formed in 2007. Revitalizing traditional hand drumming as cultural resistance for contemporary living, its members are recognized by their communities for solidarity work focusing on Indigenous feminism and urban community-building initiatives. Active in the arts scene and at street demonstrations, Odaya currently consists of four women of diverse Indigenous heritage: Nahka Bertrand (Dene-Québécoise), Dayna Danger (Métis-Saulteaux-Polish), Émilie Monnet (Anishinaabe-French) and Anik Sioui (Wendat-Québécoise).

For the past twenty years, **Isabelle Picard**, a Wendat ethno-museologist, has dedicated herself both personally and professionally to making people more aware of the realities and issues facing Québec's First Peoples. As a consultant to Indigenous and non-Indigenous organizations for more than a decade, Isabelle has always sought to build bridges and focus on commonalities with all she encounters. Her writings and public presentations both revolve around experiences and stories she knows well. She is also a lecturer at Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM), a contributor to *La Presse* and Radio-Canada, and does speaking engagements.

**Qajaq Robinson** is a graduate of the University of Victoria, Akitsiraq Law Program, out of Iqaluit, Nunavut. Born in Iqaluit and raised in Igloodik, she has spent most of her career and life in Inuit Nunangat. Following law school she articulated at Maliiganik Tukisiiniakvik, clerked with judges of the Nunavut Court of Justice under then-Chief Justice Beverly Browne, and then became a Crown prosecutor who worked the circuit court in Nunavut for four years. Prior to her appointment as commissioner to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Robinson was legal counsel at the Specific Claims Tribunal, and before that an Associate with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP in Ottawa, Ontario.

**Wina T. Sioui** is a Wendat lawyer, member of the Barreau du Québec and Certified Mediator in civil, commercial and employment-related issues. Having always gravitated in and around First Nations communities, she has extensive knowledge and expertise in the lives and cultures of Indigenous Peoples. By nature passionate, dynamic and creative, Wina is appreciated for her professionalism, openness to others, negotiating skills, leadership and ability to express complex issues in ways that people can understand. After working for about ten years in a well-known boutique law firm specializing in Indigenous issues, Wina now acts as legal counsel and assembly Chair for First Nations clients, including the Assembly of First Nations Québec-Labrador (AFNQL), Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Québec Native Women Inc., and various First Nations governments.

**Skawennati** makes art that addresses history, the future and change from her perspective as an urban Kanien'kehá:ka woman and as a cyber-punk avatar. Her work has been widely presented in group exhibitions and solo shows, and is included in public and private collections, such as the National Gallery of Canada and the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal. Born in Kahnawà:ke Mohawk Territory, Skawennati graduated with a BFA from Concordia University in Montréal, where she is based. She is Co-Director of Aboriginal Territories in Cyberspace (AbTeC), a research-creation network of artists and academics who investigate and create Indigenous virtual environments; their Skins workshops in Aboriginal Storytelling and Experimental Digital Media are aimed at empowering youth. In 2015 AbTeC launched the Initiative for Indigenous Futures (IIF).

**Fanny Wylde** is an Algonquin from the community of Pikogan, in Abitibi-Témiscamingue. Growing up she was close to her grandparents and throughout her life has retained her culture and mother tongue, which she still speaks today. In 2007 she became the Algonquin Nation's first lawyer in Québec, as well as the province's first Indigenous criminal and penal prosecuting attorney. Subsequently, she worked for several Indigenous communities and organizations, and was a member of the legal team for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls from the time it was established through to the very end. She has always been and remains dedicated to achieving justice and equity for the First Peoples of Canada.